

The background of the page is a photograph of a large, modern university building. The building is constructed from light-colored stone or brick and features a prominent series of arches. It is situated on a grassy bank next to a body of water, which reflects the building and the sky. The sky is a clear, bright blue with some light clouds. The overall scene is bright and sunny, suggesting a pleasant day.

Together we are *Bondies*

**Report on Bond University's response to Sexual Harm
2022**

In the spirit of reconciliation, Bond University acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which the University now stands.

The Kombumerri people have walked and cared for this land and wildlife for thousands of years, and their descendants maintain spiritual connection and traditions. We thank them for sharing their cultures, spiritualities and ways of living with the land and wildlife in the place we all now call home.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR

Prof. Tim Brailsford

President and Vice Chancellor

The issue of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault (SASH) is a scourge on our society and it cannot, and must not, be tolerated on university campuses or elsewhere. At Bond, we are very conscious of the deep and lasting impact that such abhorrent behaviours can inflict on victims and survivors. The University is deeply sorry to those who have experienced any form of sexual harassment or sexual assault.

Our goal is to eradicate these behaviours through education. Bond University is committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for all students so they feel empowered to speak up, seek help and where perpetrators cannot hide.

As well as procedural reviews, process overhauls and better training around trauma-informed responses, data indicates we have an information gap when it comes to under-reporting so a key component is focusing on the students' need to feel comfortable talking about these issues. We now know students are more willing to talk to their peers about sexual harassment and sexual assault than to persons in authority.

Therefore, a critical component of our [action plan](#) is ensuring the entire student cohort is included on the journey. Bond's student leadership team has been - and will continue to be - part of this educative process.

This document provides an overview as to the actions taken by Bond University responding to the sector identified issues outlined in the 2017 Australian Human Rights Commission Change the Course report, and subsequent NSSS surveys. Our actions leverage advice provided by the 2022 Task Force into Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment which, consistent with the University's long-held position to always listen to students and put their interests first, the majority of the task force comprised of students and alumni.

A thematic analysis followed the work of the Task Force and it found that the procedures and processes at Bond were not designed to be able to respond appropriately. Critically there was:

- (i) a lack of education for staff, students and community in relation to preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment matters;
- (ii) a deficiency in reporting mechanisms and confusion as to the remediations available; and
- (iii) an absence of coordinated and consistent, easily accessible trauma informed response.

The actions described below outline our progress to rectify these matters.

Note that Bond University works with the wider definition of 'Sexual Harm' in responding to these matters. We have chosen to do so as it encompasses any unwanted, behaviour of a sexual nature. Sexual harm includes sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment, sex-based harassment, and any other unwanted sexual behaviour, whether online or in-person including image-based abuse.



EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

We seek to empower our staff and students to champion respectful and inclusive behaviours, be active bystanders, support those in need and call out actions that are inconsistent with the values held at Bond. It is incumbent upon us to use those learnings to guide and shape the future.

As the Honourable David Hurley stated “**The standard you walk past is the standard you accept**”^[1] Whilst working or studying at Bond, who we are - and importantly who we will become - is further shaped. For some, the values, concepts and expectations articulated here are consistent with their upbringing, community and their personal sense of what is right. For others, the information shared and the expectations required may challenge their perceptions of self, what is ‘acceptable’ and what is the perceived appropriate response. We acknowledge that we cannot address these issues in isolation. A whole of population response is necessary to address the drivers of sexual harm and violence.

STUDENT FOCUSED

Student-led: Student-driven initiatives form a central component of our response to these matters. Specific activities during Week 4 on campus, ***Together we are Bondies***. Co-author university led training to ensure the messaging is on point and responsive to the changing needs of the student cohorts. Review of student activities risk matrix with specific emphasis on sexual harm.

University-led: A life cycle approach has been implemented where expectations are articulated prior to arrival, through Orientation (including specialist training for those living in student residences and student clubs and societies). These learnings are reinforced in curricular and co-curricular activities. Review activities are conducted in week 4 of each academic period for new students to assess the impact of both student and staff-led training.

[1] David Morrison Speech Transcript: The standard you walk past is the standard you accept. – What’s Your Message? (vividmethod.com)



STAFF FOCUSED

A comprehensive review of staff capability and response was undertaken. As a result of the findings the university has implemented:

Faculty and centrally-based trained first responders

The work of these individuals is further supported by whole-of-university training introduced as a mandatory requirement for all staff.

Student Wellbeing and Safety and Advisory Committee

This Committee meets each semester and includes a BUSA representative. The terms of reference including regular, anonymised reporting on cases of concern regarding any form of misconduct or sexual harm.

Student Wellbeing team including specialist Student Wellbeing Advisory roles

This team also has carriage of matters that are lodged through BondCare, providing a holistic response that is available to the student whilst they are enrolled at Bond. Bond operates with a 'No Wrong Door' approach, and will extend support and assistance to students regardless of their choice of action.



REPORTING

The Australian Bureau of Statistics 2022 Personal Safety report identifies that an “estimated 8 million Australians (41%) have experienced violence (physical and/or sexual) since the age of 15”, including:

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

31% of **women** have experienced physical violence

42% of **men** have experienced physical violence

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

22% of **women** have experienced sexual violence [2]

6.1% of **men** have experienced sexual violence [2]

The National Student Survey conducted in 2021 of 43,819 university students found that:

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

16.1% 1 in 6 students had experienced sexual harassment since starting university

SEXUAL ASSAULT

4.5% 1 in 20 students had experienced sexual assault since starting university

[2] Personal Safety, Australia, 2021-22 financial year | Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au)

Self-reporting is the number one method of reporting at Bond. Assisted reporting through Student Wellbeing, trained university first responders and Security accounts for the majority of other reports. To ensure the holistic support of our students, reports are streamlined through the BondCare process. This allows a trauma-informed response and support provided to those involved.

Bond follows the Universities Australia approach:

- Students can make a disclosure (obtaining support and assistance responsive to individual needs such as welfare, academic accommodations or residential modifications for example); or
- Formal report which requires the university to undertake specific actions consistent with the respective staff and student codes of conduct.

Our codes of conduct reflect our commitment to our staff and students. They are underpinned by procedural fairness and where a case is substantiated, hold those accountable for their actions.

Bond University has the largest percentage of students living on campus[3]. This combined with the education and awareness activities conducted by the university will generally mean that the number of cases reported (as either a disclosure or formal report) will be higher year on year.

| 2022 | Alleged Sexual Harassment | Alleged Sexual Assault |
|---------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Disclosure | 12 | 4 |
| Formal Report | 0 | 6 |

This represents 0.3% of our staff and student population. The outcomes of the six formal reports regarding alleged sexual harm are as follows:

- *Two were reported to police*
- *Two were closed when the respondent student left the university*
- *Two were investigated and the outcome was that there was insufficient information available from which to make a determination.*

[3] As a percentage of the student population.



SUPPORT

Bond University promotes the empowerment of the individual to make informed decisions on the best course of action for them personally. When students make the choice to disclose to someone, there is no requirement to take further action until they feel safe and confident in doing so.

At each stage of the response process, we will allow for trauma-informed practice that is victim-centric and led by individual determination as to what comes next.

Whatever a student's decision, our support services include Student Wellbeing Advisors, Counsellors, medical services, academic and study supports and student associations.

Our options for disclosure and decision-making are outlined in the following webpages:

- [Safe and Respectful Communities](#)
- [Response to sexual misconduct](#)
- [BondCare](#)
- [Bond Wellbeing Services](#)

The university's action report is [accessible here](#) and also available as a standalone document on the [university webpage](#).

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